

Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 NEAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 INRE-00

SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 ACDA-05 OMB-01 SAM-01 SAB-01

A-01 OPR-02 OC-05 CCO-00 EB-07 /097 W

----- 048333

O P 271230Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8346

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER IMMEDIATE

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

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COMMSIXTHFLT

CTF SIX ZERO
CTF SIX ONE
CTF SIX TWO
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA
DIA WASHDC
CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 0848

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PINT, LE
SUBJECT: CEASEFIRE MAY BE TAKING ROOT

REF: BEIRUT 825 (1415Z)

SUMMARY: CALM GENERALLY PREVAILS IN BEIRUT AND THROUGH-
OUT COUNTRY, AS CEASEFIRE IMPLEMENTATION STILL PROCEEDING
WELL. SUPPLY SITUATION IN CAPITAL MUCH IMPROVED. NO
ANNOUNCEMENT OF POLITICAL ASPECT OF SETTLEMENT YET.
FRANGIE-ASAD SUMMIT IN DAMASCUS IS NOW EXPECTED TO
OCCUR LATER THIS WEEK. END SUMMARY.

1. CITY LIFE IS SLOWLY RETURNING TO NORMAL IN BEIRUT.
WITHDRAWAL OF ARMED MEN FROM HOTEL DISTRICT WAS COM-
PLETED SUCCESSFULLY LATE JAN 26, REMOVING A MAJOR SOURCE
OF POTENTIAL TROUBLE AND OPENING STREETS THROUGH THAT
DISTRICT BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT. PHALANGIST SEIGE
OF TELL ZAATAR CAMP ALSO REPORTEDLY LIFTED JAN 26, AS
PHALANGE ALLOWED SUPPLIES TO REACH CAMP. EFFORTS TODAY,
JAN 27, WILL CENTER ON REMOVAL OF ARMED MEN FROM ALL
REMAINING BARRICADES BY 1800 HOURS LOCAL.

2. SOME TENSION AND A HANDFUL OF MINOR INCIDENTS ARE
REPORTED FROM THE ZGHORTA AREA AND THE BEKAA VALLEY,
BUT THESE HAVE NOT DETRACTED FROM THE GENERAL CALM IN
BOTH REGIONS.

3. SUPPLY SITUATION IN CAPITAL AREA IS MUCH IMPROVED.
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FLOUR AND PETROLEUM SUPPLIES ARE BEING DISTRIBUTED
TO MOST OUTLETS AND SHORTAGES ARE NO LONGER ACUTE.

4. PRESS REPORTS THAT BRITISH BANK OF MIDDLE EAST OF-
FICE IN BAB IDRIS (CENTER OF CITY) HERE LEARNED THAT 500
OF ITS SAFE DEPOSIT BOXES WERE LOOTED DURING LATEST ROUND
OF STRIFE. ACETYLENE TORCHES WERE USED TO ENTER THE
BOXES, WHOSE OWNERS WERE MAINLY LEBANESE AND OTHER

ARABS. THE LOSS IS EVALUATED AT MILLIONS OF POUNDS.

5. SYRIAN DELEGATION WAS AGAIN ACTIVE JAN 26 SEEING GREEK ORTHODOX LEADER AND ALSO MOSLEM AND LEFTIST REPRESENTATIVES. SYRIANS KEPT REPEATING REFRAIN THAT THEY DO NOT INTEND TO KEEP FORCES IN LEBANON BEYOND THE TIME NECESSARY TO RESTORE ORDER. ACCORDING TO ONE SOURCE, THEY SAID THEY WILL PULL FORCES OUT WHENEVER PRES FRANGIE ASKS THEM TO DO SO. THEY ALSO GAVE ASSURANCE THAT THEY WOULD SEEK TO CONTROL THE PALESTINIANS. KHADDAM AND POSSIBLY SHIHABI MAY TRAVEL TO DAMASCUS JAN 27, LEAVING JAMIL BEHIND. THEY ARE EXPECTED TO RETURN TO BEIRUT JAN 28 OR 29. THERE IS RENEWED SPECULATION OF A FRANGIE-ASAD SUMMIT, POSSIBLY AT END OF THIS WEEK IF THE CEASEFIRE CONTINUES TO HOLD.

6. FRANGIE'S ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE SUMMIT IS STILL BEING DELAYED. NOT ALL CHRISTIAN LEADERS ARE FULLY ON BOARD, ALTHOUGH MOST ARE NOW BELIEVED TO HAVE ACCEPTED BROAD OUTLINE. FUAD SHIMALI, SPEAKING FOR HARD-LINING DEFENDERS OF CEDARS, IS REPORTEDLY ONLY SERIOUS HOLD-OUT, BUT OTHERS WISH TO BARGAIN ON CERTAIN UNRESOLVED POINTS. MOREOVER, FRANGIE IS MAINTAINING POSITION THAT SECURITY MUST BE FIRM BEFORE THE ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE. ACCORDING TO PRESS SOURCES, SUMMIT IN DAMASCUS WILL PRECEDE ANNOUNCEMENT IN ANY CASE.

7. THE CABINET IS DUE TO MEET TOMORROW. ASPECTS OF THE SETTLEMENT MAY BE DISCUSSED AT THAT SESSION, AND BILL PREPARED FOR PRESENTATION TO PARLIAMENT TO IMPLEMENT REFORM PROGRAM.

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8. LEFTIST LEADER ARAFAT HAS STIRRED UP THE POLITICAL

WATERS HERE A BIT WITH HIS REITERATED CALL FOR FRANGIE'S RESIGNATION. HE MADE THIS STATEMENT IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE PARIS DAILY "LE MONDE." POSSIBLE REPLACEMENTS FOR FRANGIE, IN JUMBLATT'S VIEW, WOULD BE GEN. HANNA SAID, RAYMOND EDDE, ELIAS SARKIS, AND PIERRE HILU (ALL MARONITES). FEW OBSERVERS EXPECT ANYTHING TO COME OF THIS STATEMENT AT PRESENT STAGE IN WHICH FRANGIE IS LYNCHPIN OF NEGOTIATIONS, BUT IT ILLUSTRATES JUMBLATT'S CONTINUED CAPACITY FOR MAKING TROUBLESOME REMARKS. LAMBRAKIS

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